AEZ for tobacco in Andhra Pradesh

321. SHRI RAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Andhra Pradesh is called tobacco capital of the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact in view of the bumper export of tobacco to other countries during 2004-05, Government of India are seriously thinking of setting up of an Agro Export Zone for tobacco in Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether any request from the Government of Andhra Pradesh or from the public representatives has been received in the Ministry for setting up of Agro Export Zone for tobacco in Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) if so, what the Ministry has done on such a request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are the two major Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco producing States of the country.

(b) to (d) The export of tobacco and tobacco products has steadily increased over the years and reached Rs. 1362.18 crores during 2004-05. No proposal for setting up of an Agri-Export Zone has been received either from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh or from public representatives. However, a special mention regarding the need for setting up an Agri-Export Zone for tobacco in Andhra Pradesh was made in the Parliament during the last session.

Patent to wheat

322. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are examining issues on patent to wheat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to impose strict liability on corporations in case of genetic contamination and to put in place a system to preserve and protect the country's rich bio-diversity;